

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A location-reporting method comprising:
5 receiving a location-reporting request from a first mobile subscriber;
responsive to the request, making a determination that a second mobile subscriber is
located in a zone in common with the first mobile subscriber; and
responsive to the determination, sending a location-reporting message to the second
mobile subscriber, the location-reporting message indicating a location of the first mobile
subscriber.
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2. The location-reporting method of claim 1, wherein the location-reporting message
indicates a proximity of the first mobile subscriber to the second mobile subscriber.
- 15 3. The location-reporting method of claim 2, wherein the location-reporting message
indicates that the first mobile subscriber is nearby the second mobile subscriber.
4. The location-reporting method of claim 2, wherein the location-reporting message
indicates that the first mobile subscriber is in a location in common with the second mobile
20 subscriber.
5. The location-reporting method of claim 1, wherein the location-reporting message
indicates latitude/longitude coordinates of the first mobile subscriber.

6. The location-reporting method of claim 1, wherein the location-reporting message indicates a street address where the first mobile subscriber is located.

5 7. The location-reporting method of claim 1, wherein the location-reporting message indicates an establishment where the first mobile subscriber is located.

8. The location-reporting method of claim 1, wherein the location-reporting message includes a map depicting where the first mobile subscriber is located.

10 9. The location-reporting method of claim 1, wherein the location-reporting message indicates a compass heading and a distance, cooperatively reflecting where the first mobile subscriber is located in relation to the second mobile subscriber.

15 10. The location-reporting method of claim 1, further comprising:
in response to the request, querying a group data store to identify the second mobile subscriber.

20 11. The location-reporting method of claim 10, wherein querying a group data store to identify the second mobile subscriber comprises identifying one or more mobile subscribers defining a group associated with the first mobile subscriber, the second mobile subscriber being a member of the group.

12. The location-reporting method of claim 11, wherein the group is an instant messaging buddy list established for the first subscriber.

13. The location-reporting method of claim 1, wherein making a determination that the second mobile subscriber is located in a zone in common with the first mobile subscriber comprises:

determining that the second mobile subscriber is located within a predefined distance of the first mobile subscriber.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein making a determination that second mobile subscriber is located in a zone in common with the first mobile subscriber comprises:

determining that the first mobile subscriber and the second mobile subscriber are located a common service area of a wireless communication system.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the common service area is an area selected from the group consisting of a cell and a sector.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein making a determination that the second mobile subscriber is located in a zone in common with the first mobile subscriber comprises:

determining that the second mobile subscriber is located within a predefined geographic zone in which the first mobile subscriber is also located.

17. The method of claim 1, further comprising presenting the location-reporting message to the second subscriber.

18. The method of claim 17, further comprising presenting to the second subscriber
5 an indication of age of the location reporting message.

19. The location-reporting method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving a reply from the second mobile subscriber, after sending the location-reporting
message to the second mobile subscriber; and

10 in response to the reply, sending a location-reporting reply message to the first mobile
subscriber, the location-reporting reply message indicating a location of the second mobile
subscriber.

15 20. The location-reporting method of claim 19, wherein the location-reporting reply
message indicates a proximity of the second mobile subscriber to the first mobile subscriber.

21. The method of claim 19, further comprising presenting the location-reporting
reply message to the first subscriber.

20 22. The method of claim 21, further comprising presenting to the first subscriber an
indication of age of the location-reporting reply message.

23. The location-reporting method of claim 1, wherein sending the location-reporting message to the second mobile subscriber comprises:

sending the location-reporting message as text in an SMS message to the second mobile subscriber.

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24. The location-reporting method of claim 1, wherein sending the location-reporting message to the second mobile subscriber comprises:

sending a NetAlert message to the second mobile subscriber, the NetAlert message providing the second mobile subscriber with a link to a web site bearing the location-reporting message.

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25. The location-reporting method of claim 1, wherein sending the location-reporting message to the second mobile subscriber comprises:

sending the location-reporting message to the second mobile subscriber in an XML card.

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26. The method of claim 25, wherein the XML card is a choice card that includes a choice item selectable by a user to reply to the location-reporting message.

27. A location-reporting method comprising:

receiving a location-reporting request from a first mobile subscriber, the location-reporting request reflecting a request to report a location of the first mobile subscriber to at least a second mobile subscriber;

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making a determination of whether reporting of the first mobile subscriber's location to the second mobile subscriber is blocked; and

if the determination is that reporting of the first mobile subscriber's location to the second mobile subscriber is not blocked, then reporting the first mobile subscriber's location to the second mobile subscriber provided that the second mobile subscriber is located in a zone in common with the first mobile subscriber.

28. The location-reporting method of claim 27, wherein making a determination of whether reporting of the first mobile subscriber's location to the second mobile subscriber's location is blocked comprises determining whether a rule is set for the second mobile subscriber indicating that reporting of the first mobile subscriber's location to the second mobile subscriber's location is blocked.

29. The location-reporting method of claim 27, wherein making a determination of whether reporting of the first mobile subscriber's location to the second mobile subscriber is blocked comprises determining whether the first mobile subscriber is included in a buddy list established for the second mobile subscriber,

wherein reporting of the first mobile subscriber's location to the second mobile subscriber's location is blocked if the first mobile subscriber is not included in the buddy list established for the second mobile subscriber.

30. A location-reporting method comprising:

receiving from a first mobile subscriber a request to report the first mobile subscriber's location;

responsive to the request, identifying a group of mobile subscribers associated with the first mobile subscriber;

5 with respect to each mobile subscriber in the group, determining whether the mobile subscriber is located in a zone in common with the first mobile subscriber and, if so, sending a location-reporting message to the mobile subscriber, the location-reporting message indicating a location of the first mobile subscriber;

10 receiving from at least a given mobile subscriber in the group a reply to the location-reporting message; and

responsive to the reply, sending to first mobile subscriber a location-reporting reply message indicating a location of the given mobile subscriber.

15 31. The location-reporting method of claim 30, wherein identifying a group of mobile subscribers associated with the first mobile subscriber comprises:

querying a data store to identify the group of mobile subscribers; and

excluding from the group any mobile subscriber to which reporting of the first mobile subscriber's location is blocked.

20 32. A system comprising:

a processor;

data storage; and

machine language instructions stored in the data storage and executable by the processor
in response to a location-reporting request from a first mobile subscriber, to:

make a determination that a second mobile subscriber is located in a zone in
common with the first mobile subscriber; and

5 responsive to the determination, send a location-reporting message to the second
mobile subscriber, the location-reporting message indicating a location of the first mobile
subscriber.

10 33. The system of claim 32, wherein the location-reporting message indicates a
proximity of the first mobile subscriber to the second mobile subscriber.